9119
5

A SERMON

PREACH'D IN

LAMBETH-CHAPEL,

AT THE

CONSECRATION

Of the Right Reverend Fathers in GOD

HENRY Lord Biſhop of *Hereford*,

AND

RICHARD Lord Biſhop of St. *David's*.

On *Sunday*, *February* 2, 1723.

By *SAMUEL CROXALL*, M. A.
Vicar of *Hampton*, and Chaplain in Ordinary to his Majeſty.

Publiſh'd by Order of his GRACE the Lord Archbiſhop of *CANTERBURY*.

LONDON:
Printed for J. WATTS, at the Printing-Office in *Wild-Court*, near *Lincoln's-Inn-Fields*. M DCC XXIV.

1 Tim. iv. 6.

If thou put the Brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good Minister of Jesus Christ, *nourished up in the words of Faith and of good Doctrine whereunto thou hast attained.*

THE great Apostle of the Gentiles, *to whose Trust the glorious Gospel of the blessed God was committed, who was counted faithful and put into the Ministry by Jesus Christ himself*, and by that means sufficiently authoriz'd to convey the same Trust to others; upon his Departure from *Ephesus*, where he had made a large Plantation of the Christian Faith, had appointed *Timothy*, young as he was, to be Superintendent of that Church. It appears that he had given him a Charge before he left that Place to go into *Macedonia*; of which this Epistle might be intended as a Repetition and Reinforcement; being fill'd with such peculiar Instructions as it was proper for him to observe in the Execution of his Episcopal Office. Instructions so ample, so direct and particular, that it would be inexcusable in any Church which desires to be thought truly Apostolic, not to copy after them, and conform to them with a dutiful and conscientious Compliance.

The different Capacities and Stations of such as were employed in the Ministerial Function; particularly, the necessary Qualifications and various Branches of Duty re-

lating to the higheſt Order, that of Biſhops, are there diſtinguiſh'd and ſpecified: in the whole, too numerous and extenſive to be treated of in the Compaſs of an ordinary Diſcourſe. And therefore, for the Subject of this, I ſhall confine my ſelf to only one ſingle Inſtruction of all which the Apoſtle has given: But that of ſo much Weight and Dignity, that a Biſhop's being *a good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt* is made to depend upon the Regard he has for it. *If thou put the Brethren in remembrance of theſe things, thou ſhalt be a good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt.*

For the better Explication of which Words, I ſhall take the Liberty,

I. To inquire what *Things* theſe are, which the Apoſtle is ſo concern'd to have *the Brethren put in remembrance of.*

II. To ſhew, how *putting the Brethren in remembrance of theſe things* intitles a Biſhop to *be a good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt.*

I. To inform our ſelves what *things* the Apoſtle is ſo concern'd *the Brethren ſhould be put in remembrance of,* we muſt have recourſe to the three firſt Verſes of the Chapter; where they are *expreſsly* mentioned. *The Spirit ſpeaketh expreſsly* (ſays the Apoſtle) *that in the latter Times ſome ſhall depart from the Faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits, and doctrines of Devils. Speaking Lies in hypocriſy, having their Conſcience ſear'd with an hot Iron. Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abſtain from Meats, which God hath created to be received with thankſgiving of them which believe and know the Truth.* To which he preſently ſubjoins, *If thou put the Brethren in remembrance of theſe things, thou ſhalt be a good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt.*

It muſt be allow'd, that the Characters in this Deſcription are very accurately and diſtinctly drawn. Notwithſtanding which, by that indefinite Account of the Time, it ſeems ſomewhat hard to determine what particular Apoſtaſy from the Faith is here intended by the Spirit. Accordingly,

cordingly, Interpreters have gone into Variety of Opinions about it; each following the Suggeſtions of his own Judgment, and applying the Deſcription to that Hereſy which ſeem'd to come the neareſt in Reſemblance to it.

Some, fancying that theſe Apoſtates were actually propagating their heretical Notions at the time of the Apoſtle's writing, conclude the *Gnoſtics* were the Men; becauſe, being Followers of *Simon Magus*, they held it was unlawful to marry, and prohibited the eating of Fleſh.

But theſe, correſponding with the Deſcription only in Part, and ſeeming to have ſprung up too early to be compriz'd within the Senſe of *the latter times*; Others have appropriated the Propheſy to other Hereſies, which took their Birth ſome time after, ſuch as thoſe of the *Marcioniſts* and *Encratites*; Who yet, notwithſtanding what is reported of them, do not ſeem to be the People sketched out in this prophetical Delineation of the *Spirit*.

What therefore appears moſt probable is, that St. *Paul* by reciting this Catalogue of Tokens belonging to *ſome* who ſhould *depart from the Faith*; and that, without naming the very Time when ſuch Defection ſhould happen; intended to leave a Latitude to ſucceeding Ages to apply them as Occaſion ſhould offer. We muſt allow it was ſufficiently gracious in the *Spirit*, and good in the Apoſtle, to warn the Church that Enemies of ſo malignant a Nature would, ſome time or other, infeſt it. Such a Precaution may well ſerve to keep it upon a conſtant Guard, in a continual Poſture of Defence, and render it as little liable to be ſeduced and miſ-led, as the Fallibility of human Nature will admit. For tho' the Members of the Chriſtian Commonwealth may have reaſon to be alarm'd at the Appearance of ſuch as are diſtinguiſh'd by only ſome of the Marks given in this Deſcription; as were thoſe ancient Heretics before-mention'd: Yet it would be an Inſtance of great Supineneſs and Neglect to conclude, upon

ſo

ſo imperfect a Diſcovery, that the Propheſy was fulfilled, and they were ever after to be ſecure from all Deluſions of that Kind. By being kept awake under this perpetual Liberty of Conjecture and Application, they will be more likely, in due time, to diſcover the real Seducers pointed at by the Apoſtle. At leaſt, ſuch a Vigilance will never hurt them; but may be a Means of their detecting ſome other palpable Apoſtaſy, till they happen to light upon the true one.

And yet, when we conſider how widely *ſome*, for many Centuries paſt, *have departed from the Faith*, and how exactly they agree, in all reſpects, with the Characters given by the *Spirit*, we are expos'd to no ſmall Temptation of believing this Prediction to be accompliſhed. For, among all the Hereſies that have appeared in the Chriſtian World ſince the Apoſtles Days, none has ſo completely anſwer'd theſe Prefigurations, as that of *Rome*. The Lineaments of Popery are diſcoverable in every Expreſſion: So ſtrong and lively, that the only Plea the Advocates for this Apoſtaſy can pretend to make in their own behalf, is, that they exceed all the Marks given in the Deſcription. And indeed we muſt own that all the Errors of *Rome* are not crowded into this ſhort prophetic Piece. But then, we may ſafely aver that every Error mention'd in this Revelation is patronized and adopted by the *Romiſh* Church. As will appear more fully upon their being examin'd and compar'd together.

Verſe 1. *The Spirit ſpeaketh expreſsly that in the latter times ſome ſhall depart from the Faith, giving heed to ſeducing Spirits and Doctrines of Devils.* Now tho' *giving heed to ſeducing Spirits*, (the common Preliminary to a *Departure from the Faith*) may be applicable to all Hereſies as well as that of *Rome*; yet *giving heed to the Doctrines of Devils*, is an Error peculiar to that Church. Δαιμόνιον, here tranſlated *Devil*, among profane Authors alwys implies ſome Deity or other; generally of the inferior Kind; ſuch as thoſe deified Heroes of old whom the Heathens us'd to worſhip, in order to procure their

Inter-

Interceſſion with the Gods of an higher Rank. And it is underſtood in the ſame Senſe in many Places of the old and new Teſtaments: Particularly, when St. *Paul* preach'd *Jeſus and the Reſurrection* at *Athens*, the *Stoics* and *Epicureans* look'd upon him as *a ſetter forth of ſtrange Gods*, ξένων δαιμονίων. And that, in great Probability, from his having ſpoken of our bleſſed Saviour in his mediatorial Capacity.

Now the *Papiſts* are notorious for *giving heed* to ſuch a Doctrine as this. As is manifeſt, by their praying to Angels and Saints without Number; nay, to the Images and Pictures of them; and having reviv'd all the Follies of Pagan Idolatry. And, when they are charg'd with ſo unchriſtian a Practice, have nothing to ſay in excuſe for themſelves, but that they only pray to theſe to intercede for them, without deſigning to make them the ultimate Objects of their Adoration. By which it appears that, at beſt, they have no Way to evade the Imputation of being ſuch as *give heed to the Doctrines of Devils*. It is certain they worſhip departed Men and Women; whom they have canoniz'd into Saints; and to whom they aſcribe ſuch a Power of Interceſſion, as was attributed to the *Dæmons* of the Heathen World: Which ſhews a mighty Similitude, in this reſpect, between them and the Apoſtates deſcrib'd by the *Spirit*.

Verſe 2. it is foretold that this Deſertion from the Faith ſhall be promoted ἐν ὑποκρίσει ψευδολόγων, *thro' the Hypocriſy of ſuch as ſpeak Lies; having their Conſcience ſear'd with an hot Iron*. Which is a Metaphor taken from the Cuſtom, in many Places, of branding with an hot Iron ſuch Criminals as are found to be very impudent and incorrigible Cheats.

Perhaps both theſe Marks may be juſtly applied to the Ringleaders of ſeveral pernicious Hereſies; but to none more juſtly than the Conductors of that of *Rome*. *Hypocriſy*, *Lying*, and *a Conſcience* notoriouſly *branded*, are the true Fundamentals of their pretended Religion. The Authorities by which their Scheme is principally ſup-

ſupported, being Traditions and Legends; the Inventions of tricking Knaves, or the Dreams of enthuſiaſtic Fools. The holy Scripture, without Controverſy the true and only Rule of every Chriſtian's Faith, is ſet aſide, to make way for *profane and old Wive's Fables*. They will not ſuffer their ignorant Laity (and ignorant they are reſolv'd to keep them) ſo much as to look into it. Nor do they make any reaſonable Uſe of it themſelves. They refuſe to admit it as a Teſt of thoſe Impoſitions which they make neceſſary to Salvation. Or (which is the ſame thing) will only admit it in ſuch a Senſe as the pretended Infallibility of their own Councils and Popes have been pleas'd to affix to it. In this reſpect, following the Example of thoſe other *Hypocrites*, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*; who (our Lord tells us) *ſhut up the Kingdom of Heaven againſt Men: neither going in themſelves, nor ſuffering them that were entering to go in.*

Their Doctrine of Tranſubſtantiation, which is ſo monſtrous an Abſurdity, that barely to name it is at once to expoſe and confute it: Their expunging the ſecond Commandment out of the Decalogue, becauſe it forbids the Worſhip of Images, and ſplitting the tenth in two to make up the Number again: And their Practice of praying publicly in an unknown Tongue; in Defence of which, they have not the leaſt Shadow of a Reaſon to produce; are three Inſtances of a conſummate Confidence, and of *a Conſcience ſear'd with an hot Iron*. To which I ſhall add one more, that of their pretending to work Miracles. Tho' (bleſſed be God) upon ſuch Occaſions their Management is ſo coarſe and threadbare as to be ſeen thro' by every Eye which is not blinded with Superſtition.

Now, as all theſe are undoubted Impoſtures, it is certain that they were at firſt contriv'd, and have been ever ſince ſupported, *thro' the Hypocriſy of ſuch as ſpeak Lies*. And it is as unqueſtionable that this Hypocriſy was never carried to ſo great an Heighth, nor practis'd for ſo many Ages by any other *Seducers*, as it has been by the ſpiritual Tyrants of *Rome*.

Verſe

Verſe 3. the Preſidents of *Popery* are placed in a yet fuller Light; and ſeem to be more diſtinctly and particularly deſign'd than the Projectors of any other Hereſy: *Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abſtain from Meats.*

The *Papiſts*, conſcious of their being pointed out ſo very plainly by theſe glaring and conſpicuous Tokens, endeavour to ſcreen themſelves by appropriating the Character to ſome other Heretics. They ſay the *Ebionites* and the Followers of *Saturninus* and *Marcion* are moſt likely to be the People preſignified here by the *Spirit*; the Writers of Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory informing us that ſome of the Tenets of theſe Apoſtates conſiſted in forbidding Marriage, and in abſtaining from ſome ſort of Meats. But if we conſider the proper Import of the Word κωλυόντων, which is here render'd *forbidding*, we ſhall find that the Meaning of this Character cannot be made to ſuit any other Heretics whatever ſo well as the *Papiſts* themſelves. Κωλύειν is *obſtare quo minus fiat*, to hinder, to prevent a Thing from being done; which is more than barely to *forbid* it. And tho' ſome little heretical Upſtarts may have taken upon them to *forbid* marrying, yet the *Papiſts* are the firſt that ever had it in their Power to *prevent* it. They have prohibited Marriage, among all thoſe whom they term *Religious*, under very ſevere Penalties. Many Thouſands, of both Sexes, are drawn in, I might ſay compell'd, to obſerve a perpetual Celibacy; from which it is reckon'd an unpardonable Crime ever to depart: And I need not ſay what Treatment they are like to find whom that *Church* will not vouchſafe to pardon. A *Popiſh* Inquiſition can do more than *forbid*: It can puniſh thoſe who dare do what is *forbidden*: And does actually inflict its Puniſhments, upon ſuch Occaſions, in ſo cruel a manner, as to ſtrike an Awe and a Terror into Men's Minds equal to the moſt forceable Reſtraint. Only to them therefore and their Hereſy, is the Word κωλυόντων applicable, as it is us'd in this Place. What Apoſtaſies may happen in future times, and with what Powers inveſted, we know

not; but this we know, that no Defection from the Apoſtolic Faith has ever yet been attended with a Power to prevent marrying, and made uſe of it to that Purpoſe, except that of *Rome*.

And that of *Rome*, not only *forbids to marry*, but aſſumes to it ſelf an Authority of *commanding to abſtain from Meats*. Meats *which God has created to be receiv'd with Thankſgiving of them which believe and know the Truth*. But it is no new Thing for the Abetters of *Popery* to pervert the Deſigns of God. And therefore, in oppoſition to this and many other Paſſages in Scripture to the ſame Purpoſe, the *Romiſh* Church *commands to abſtain from* Fleſh *Meats* on certain Days in the Week. Nor will their Pretence of appointing theſe as Days of Faſting and Abſtinence be any ſufficient Excuſe in this Caſe. For tho', upon this Account, Fleſh is forbidden by them, yet the beſt kinds of Fiſh, with many other Delicacies, dreſs'd in the moſt luxurious manner, are permitted. And yet it is wonderful to behold with what Formality the Obſervance of this nominal Abſtinence is exacted. Tho' perhaps it would be hard to aſſign any more ſubſtantial Reaſon for the Inſtitution of ſuch a Piece of Diſcipline, *But* that *the Scriptures muſt be fulfilled*. To which *Popery* has taken care to pay a ſtrict unerring Obedience in all thoſe Places which have prophetically deſcrib'd its Apoſtacy; and that even to a Supererogation.

But then in other reſpects, where our Conformity to the Word of God is juſtly and rationally requir'd, what People were ever ſo obſtinate, ſo perverſe and contradictory as the Diſciples and Followers of the *Pope*? The Word of God forbids us *to worſhip any graven Image; or the Likeneſs of any thing that is in Heaven above, or in the Earth beneath, or in the Waters under the Earth*. *Popery*, in oppoſition to this, ſets up the Images of Angels and Saints in its Temples, and cauſes its People to worſhip them. Our Lord ſaid, *Bleſs them that curſe you, and pray for them that perſecute you*. But the *Papiſts* invert the Order of theſe Words; by *curſing*, and *perſecuting* (as far as their Power reaches) all,

all, who are not of the ſame corrupt Opinion; even thoſe who, according to this heavenly Precept of the Goſpel, *bleſs* and *pray* for them in Return. Our Lord *gave the Cup* (in like manner as he did the Bread) *to his Diſciples*; and ſaid, *Drink ye* ALL *of this*. And St. *Paul*, writing to ALL the Chriſtians at *Corinth*, bids them (after having *examin'd themſelves*) *eat of that Bread and drink of that Cup*. But *Popery* ſtands up againſt this, and refuſes to let ALL *drink of that Cup*. Their Clergy confine that Privilege to themſelves: And will not allow that *auricular Confeſſion*, much leſs *Self-examination*, can qualify the Laity for it. St. *Paul* (in the fourteenth Chapter of his firſt Epiſtle) labours to convince the ſame *Corinthians* how neceſſary it was that the Prayers of the Church ſhould be made in a Tongue underſtood by all the Congregation. For otherwiſe (ſays he) *How ſhall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned ſay Amen at thy giving of Thanks, ſeeing he underſtandeth not what thou ſayeſt?* After which he adds, *I thank my God I ſpeak with Tongues more than you all; yet, in the Church, I had rather ſpeak five Words with my Underſtanding, that by my Voice I might teach others alſo, than ten thouſand Words in an unknown Tongue*. Yet the Practice of *Popery* is a point blank Contradiction to this whole Chapter. All the Service of the *Romiſh* Church is perform'd in an unknown Tongue; where the Prieſt, inſtead of edifying the People, *ſpeaketh into the Air*; and is to his poor Audience, who *know not the meaning of his Voice*, (as St. *Paul* truly expreſſes it) a very *Barbarian*. The ſame Apoſtle ſays *a Biſhop muſt be the Husband of one Wife; having his Children in Subjection with all Gravity*. *Popery* will not allow either its *Biſhops* or inferior Clergy ever to marry; nor conſequently to have any Children, conſiſtent with the *Gravity* of their Profeſſion. St. *Paul* tells us, *The Kingdom of God is not Meat and Drink, but Righteouſneſs, and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt*: That *every Creature of God is good, and nothing to be refus'd if it be receiv'd with Thankſgiving*.

Popery, on the other ſide, with its mercenary Pardons and Indulgences, pretends to ſalve the Non-performance of *Righteouſneſs*; but ſtrictly *commands to abſtain from* certain *Meats* upon certain Days; and makes ſuch an Abſtinence an eſſential Part of *the Kingdom of God*.

But it would be tedious to carry this Contraſt any farther: Only to enumerate the Abſurdities and Impoſitions of *Popery*, would fill a Volume. One would think the Biſhops of *Rome* had rival'd each other in their Improvements of this Departure from the Faith. It is certain that no other Hereſiarchs have correſponded with the Scripture in this Point half ſo well as they have done. Nor can they draw from thence ſo good Proofs for any Article of their pretended Chriſtianity, as may be produc'd for every Particular in which they are Antichriſtian. And, *if Antichriſt is not come*, it is a fair Queſtion to ask whether, *when he cometh he will do more* Impoſtures *than theſe which theſe Men have done*.

In the mean time, this ſhort View of *Popery* as far as it correſponds with the Predictions of the *Spirit*, may give us proper Notions of thoſe *Things* which the Apoſtle is ſo concerned to have *the Brethren put in remembrance of*. I come next,

II. To ſhew how *putting the Brethren in remembrance of theſe Things* makes a Biſhop *a good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt*.

In order to which, it will not be amiſs briefly to conſider, *Firſt*, what the State of true Religion is; or ought to be when it is in its Perfection. *Secondly*, What Miſchiefs and ill Conſequences flow from ſuch an Apoſtacy as is deſcrib'd by the *Spirit*. From whence it will appear how juſtly that Biſhop deſerves the Title of a *good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt*, who endeavours to prevent ſuch Miſchiefs, by *putting the Brethren in remembrance of theſe things*. And

Firſt, Religion was moſt certainly intended for the Refinement and Cultivation of the Soul of Man: For the Improvement of his Faculties; the Exerciſe of his Reaſon;

ſon; and the Regulation of his Behaviour in Thought, Word and Deed. Accordingly, wherever its has it proper Influence, it ſubdues our Paſſions, and keeps them from running out into Extravagancies. It incites us to good and virtuous Actions; checks and reſtrains us from criminal Purſuits; and continually diſpoſes us to be uſeful and benevolent to the reſt of Mankind. In a Word, It gives us right Notions of the End for which we came into Being; and puts us upon proper Meaſures for attaining it.

And for the better and more certain Accompliſhment of theſe noble Purpoſes, the Chriſtian Diſpenſation was revealed from Heaven; and introduc'd among Mankind by the Son of God himſelf. *Peace on Earth, and Good Will towards Men* deſcended along with it. It breath'd Humility, Meekneſs, and an univerſal Charity. All that it taught was plain, eaſy, and intelligible. To worſhip God, and him only, in Spirit and in Truth. To love, even our Enemies. To be ſo far from perſecuting others, as to bleſs them that perſecute us. To believe there will be a Reſurrection, both of the Juſt and Unjuſt: That the one will be rewarded and the other puniſh'd; and to lead our Lives accordingly in all Godlineſs and Honeſty. This is the Nature and End of Religion, while it is preſerv'd in its original Purity and Perfection.

And for the better preſerving it in this happy Situation, our LORD, before he left this World to go to the Father who ſent him, appointed certain Perſons of different Orders and Degrees, to whoſe Truſt he committed the peculiar Care and Charge thereof. For *he gave ſome, Apoſtles: and ſome, Prophets: and ſome, Evangeliſts: and ſome, Paſtors and Teachers.* All which, notwithſtanding the Diſtinction of their Titles and Offices, were ordain'd to cooperate for this one great End: (viz.) *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt.* As St. *Paul* tells the Church of *Epheſus*; having, with a View to its being kept ſteady in his Doctrine, *Charity out of a pure Heart and of a good Conſcience and of Faith unfeign'd,* intruſted

that

that and all its ſubordinate Miniſters to the Government and Superviſal of his beloved Son *Timothy*.

Let us conſider, *Secondly*, The Miſchiefs and ill Conſequences which flow from ſuch an Apoſtacy as is deſcrib'd by the *Spirit*.

The End of the Chriſtian Faith being to induce Men to lead honeſt moral Lives, in order to their mutual Happineſs here, and their obtaining *the Gift of God, Eternal Life*, hereafter; whoſoever *departs from this Faith*, either knowingly, or by blindly and implicitly following deceitful Guides, deprives himſelf of the Means conducive to this End; and is conſequently in danger of miſſing the Happineſs which would attend it. The true and only Rule of this Faith is the Word of God, as it is contain'd in the holy Scripture: So practicable and eaſy to be underſtood, as to all the important Parts of it, that any mean and common Capacity may comprehend it: And, as long as this Rule is cloſely attended to; as long as it is ſearch'd with Sincerity, regarded with Reverence, practis'd with Humility, and made the only Warrant for our Behaviour as to Matters of Religion; we are ſure never *to depart from the Faith* our ſelves, nor to be ſeduced and drawn off from it by others.

But when, inſtead of obſerving this plain and eaſy Rule, Men are ſo ſtupid and devoid of Senſe as to *give heed to ſeducing Spirits*, and ſuffer themſelves to be impos'd upon *thro' the Hypocriſy of ſuch as ſpeak Lyes*; the natural Conſequence is, that they can no longer diſtinguiſh betwixt Truth and Falſhood, Light and Darkneſs, Good and Evil; but may have one put upon them for the other; and be prevailed with to do the moſt injurious wicked Actions, under colour of ſerving the Cauſe of Religion.

And this is the very Caſe of the *Papiſts*; who are not permitted to read the Scripture; and have no Rule to examine their Faith by, but ſuch Tradition as their *Popes* have thought proper, from time to time, to deal out to them. Elſe, how were it poſſible they could be ſo infatuated as *to give heed to the Doctrines of Devils*; to run into

into mere Heathen Idolatry; ſo directly contrary to the repeated and very expreſs Word of God. But the glorious Light of the Goſpel being thus eclips'd from them, no wonder they are led into as many Errors as the *Hypocriſy* of thoſe that *ſeduce* them ſhall think convenient to broach.

Hence it is that they are made to believe it lawful, upon certain Occaſions, to lye and forſwear themſelves; to form Conſpiracies and Rebellions; to depoſe and murder Kings; and, in ſhort, to treat all who cannot be of the ſame Opinion in the moſt inhuman bloody Manner. Hence it is, that ſuch a deteſtable Doctrine as teaches, that *no Faith is to be kept with Heretics*, has been receiv'd among them. A Reſolution, ſo treacherous and unſociable, as well as unchriſtian, that the leaſt W E can do, who have not *departed from the Faith*, and, for that Reaſon, are by them accounted Heretics, is, in our own Defence, to *depart*, as far as we can, *from the Tents of theſe wicked Men*.

It may be thought unneceſſary, after theſe, to mention any other of the Miſchiefs that flow from their *ſpeaking Lies thro' Hypocriſy*. Their little low Artifices in working what they call Miracles being attended with no worſe Conſequence to the reſt of Mankind, than deluding the very blindeſt among their Votaries; exciting a ſtronger Devotion for the Images of thoſe Saints, thro' whoſe means theſe pretended Miracles are ſaid to be wrought; and cauſing a golden Shower to deſcend upon their Shrines; from thoſe Clouds of Bigotry and Superſtition, with which the Underſtandings of ſome ſilly People are overcaſt.

But their *forbidding to marry*, nay hindering and preventing it, is a Detriment to Society, and the Well-being of Mankind, as well as a Contradiction to the Word of God. So many Thouſands confin'd in a Cloyſter, devoted to Slumber and Inactivity, uſeleſs to the World and themſelves, muſt leave thoſe Countries to which they belong, proportionably poor and depopulated.

Indeed, their *commanding to abſtain from Meats*, has no great Miſchief attending it; being only a Part of the

Dreſs

Dreſs and Pageantry of theſe Mens Religion: one of the many auxiliary Circumſtances which they hang out to amuſe the Eyes of the Spectators, and keep them from prying into the more ſignificant and ſubſtantial Parts of the Deceit. However, as it is an Impoſition, as it is not only unwarranted by the Word of God, but contrary to it, we may well conſider it as a Miſchief; tho' ſuch a one as appears very innocent and harmleſs, in compariſon with ſome which I have mention'd.

As much therefore as Virtue is preferable to Vice, and Truth to Falſhood; as much as a State of Liberty, civil and religious, is more happy and eligible than one of Servitude and Perſecution; and as certainly as the Word of God recorded in the holy Scriptures is the true and only Rule of every Chriſtian's Faith: So much and ſo certainly will that Biſhop deſerve to be accounted *a good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt*, who exhibits his Love and Concern for the *Brethren*, by *putting them in remembrance of theſe things*.

The Glory of ſuch a Character will for ever attend the Memory of thoſe worthy Perſons who labour'd in the great Work of *the Reformation*. Who, by the Light of Truth, diſcover'd the monſtrous Errors of theſe Revolters *from the Faith*; And no ſooner diſcover'd, but laid open the Impoſture to all thoſe who had Eyes to ſee, and Ears to hear: With equal Courage and Conſtancy, *putting the Brethren in remembrance of theſe things*; and perſevering to do it even to Death; from amidſt the devouring Flames of *Popiſh* Perſecution.

Then it was, we may truly ſay, that the Sluices of the Goſpel were firſt open'd upon us; and our *barren and dry Land* began to be refreſh'd with *Wells of living Water, ſpringing up into everlaſting Life*. Manur'd as it were, and fertiliz'd with the Aſhes of thoſe bleſſed Martyrs, it produc'd a noble and a great Harveſt. A Harveſt of reaſonable, and therefore true, Believers: even of ſuch as *ſearch'd the Scriptures* to ſee how Things were. Who finding, upon the Review, how groſly, how barbarouſly, they had been impos'd upon, immediately proteſted againſt

gainſt the Apoſtaſy of *Rome*; and reform'd our *Church* according to the Model of *that Faith which was once deliver'd to the Saints.*

A *Church*, to it's great Credit, univerſally allow'd to be the Head and Heart of all thoſe other Chriſtians, of what Denomination ſoever, who have recover'd themſelves from the palpable Darkneſs, and worſe than *Egyptian* Bondage of *Popery*. A *Church*, that makes the holy Scriptures the only Rule of it's Faith: that lays them before the Eyes of all it's People in their own Tongue: And is ready to ſubmit all it's Articles and Diſcipline to be examin'd and proved by this truly infallible Judge. A *Church*, that diſclaims, among other Uſurpations and Corruptions of *Popery*, in a more particular Manner, it's cruel perſecuting Spirit, ſo diametrically oppoſite to the meek Temper of the Goſpel. In a Word, a *Church*, that diſtinguiſhes betwixt innocent Errors, and ſuch as are deſtructive of the civil Rights of Mankind: Betwixt thoſe who are only *weak in the Faith*, and thoſe who have *departed from it*: And, according to St. *Paul*'s Preſcription, *with Tenderneſs bears the Infirmities* of the one; but finds itſelf under a Neceſſity of *marking* and *avoiding* the other.

This preſent happy Temper of our *Church*, the Reſult of that *Moderation and Forbearance* ſo agreeably conſpicuous both in it's ſpiritual and temporal Directors, is one of it's moſt ſhining Ornaments: I might ſay, the very Teſt and Badge of it's being a truly Chriſtian Church. For it is the Effect of that peculiar Goſpel *Love*, that Apoſtolic *Charity*, *by which*, our Lord hath ſaid, *all Men ſhall know that we are his Diſciples:* And without which, all other Qualifications and Pretenſions whatever, are worth nothing.

Diſpos'd therefore by this amiable Principle it kindly extends it's indulgent Wings over thoſe *weak Brethren* whoſe inoffenſive Scruples make them ſtagger from under it's Shelter: Ready, at all times, to gather and reconcile them to it's Boſom, *as a Hen gathers her Chickens*; With a gentle cheriſhing Warmth, equally diſtant from the two Extremes ofcold inſenſible Neglect, and hot perſecuting

Zeal. But the Nurſlings of *Popery*, cruel and intractable as the young Cockatrice and ſwoln with inbred Poiſon, are unſociable to all who refuſe to ſwallow the ſame noxious and unwholſom Doctrines with themſelves: And are therefore incapable of participating with us the Fruits of this bleſſed and divine *Love*. We can only pray for them; imploring our heavenly Father to *forgive* thoſe of them who *know not what they do*; and, of his infinite Benignity, to melt the obdurate Hearts of thoſe wicked *ſeducing Spirits*, who by keeping the others in Ignorance, and by impoſing upon them thro' *Hypocriſy and Lies*, are the Cauſe of their *departing from the Faith*.

By cultivating theſe artleſs unadorn'd Beauties of Holineſs, by exerting theſe native Graces of Chriſtianity, our *Church* has drawn upon itſelf the Veneration of all the truly Faithful; but the implacable Enmity of *Rome*. *Rome* is continually employing her Artillery againſt us: And, when ſhe finds it impracticable to advance by Storm and Violence, carries on her Attacks with ſilent and ſecret Treachery. *Many a time hath ſhe fought againſt me from my Youth up, may our* Iſrael *now ſay; Yea many a time hath ſhe vexed me from my Youth up; but ſhe hath not prevailed againſt me*. The merciful Providence of God having ſtill interpos'd with ſome gracious Deliverance; having ſtill ſupply'd us, in our greateſt Dangers, with Means ſufficient to our Safety and Preſervation: More eſpecially by raiſing up among us ſuch *good Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt* as ſupported and *ſtrengthen'd the Brethren, by putting them in remembrance of theſe things*.

It would be ſuperfluous to point out the Times in which the greateſt Struggles of this nature have happen'd, or the *Miniſters* who have done the moſt Service upon ſuch Occaſions. Yet in this Place, and upon this Topic, we cannot help calling to Mind thoſe two extraordinary Patterns of the *Goodneſs* we are now ſpeaking of, who ſucceſſively fill'd the higheſt Station in the *Miniſtry of Jeſus Chriſt*, immediately after *the Revolution*. To whoſe ſteady Conduct and unwearied Labours it is greatly owing that the *Faith* has been tranſmitted down to us, ſo *pure and undefiled*. And

not

not only the *Faith*; but (if we may be allow'd to mix our Concern for Things temporal with thoſe that are eternal) that every one may ſit quiet and unmoleſted *under his own Vine and under his own Figtree*; protected, by the beſt of Governments, in a free Enjoyment of that Property which is the Fruit of his honeſt Labour. And as then the *Criſis* of our *Church* and *State* depended much on the Vigilance of theſe admirable Paſtors, ſo we may preſume the preſent Security of both (if ever they may be ſaid to be ſecure while *Popery* ſubſiſts) is eſtabliſh'd, in ſome Meaſure, by the Influence of their Example.

For under their auſpicious Adminiſtration were *nouriſhed up* thoſe *good Miniſters of Jeſus Chriſt* who now preſide in our *Church*. Who owe, to their being educated in the ſame Principles which thoſe excellent Prelates profeſſed, *the Words of the true Faith and of the good Doctrine whereunto they have attain'd*. By which they are able, and always ready, to *put the Brethren in remembrance of theſe things*.

From this *good Doctrine*, with which the Minds of its Spiritual Governors have been ſo early imbued, we muſt, with Pleaſure, confeſs that the Conſtitution of our *Church* is, at this time, in a more vigorous and flouriſhing State than ever it enjoy'd before. And, from our Sovereign's inviolable Attachment to the true *Faith*: From his Inclinations to ſuch mild and moderate Meaſures as are moſt ſuitable to the Genius of his People: From the great Credit and Eſteem he obtains among Foreign Nations; the good Diſpoſition of his Parliament; and the unparallel'd Capacity of his Council, we may venture to ſay the *Peace* of our *Jeruſalem* is built upon a more ſure Foundation than ever. Yet, ſo indefatigable are thoſe *ſeducing Spirits* which, as well at home as abroad, are Agents for the Cauſe of *Popery*, that it would not conſiſt with the Character of *a good Miniſter of Jeſus Chriſt* to abate any thing of his Vigilance, even at this time: or indeed ever forget, to *put the Brethren in remembrance of theſe things*.

Bleſſed therefore is that *Miniſter* who, with a cloſe Application in Defence of the Truth, perſeveres to baffle the inceſſant Attempts of theſe ſhameleſs Apoſtates.

Who,

Who, *nouriſhed up in the Words of Faith and of good Doctrine*, and ſupported by the invincible Forces of Scripture and Reaſon, is conſtantly employ'd in this important Part of his Duty. Who not only engages the Enemy in times of open and apparent Danger, but, by proper Preſervatives, is continually providing againſt their moſt hidden and ſecret Contrivances: Watching, like a good Shepherd over the Flock, to beat off and prevent the Incroachments of theſe rapacious Wolves. Who, when they withdraw themſelves from leſs obſervant Eyes, marks their Footſteps in the Night, and purſues them thro' the Covert of all their dark Diſguiſes. Who, with a Penetration not to be impos'd upon by the moſt artful Devices of theſe *Hypocrites*, views their felonious Intentions under their Sheep's Cloathing, and ſees the Devil conceal'd in the Angel of Light.

Bleſſed is that *Miniſter*, and *worthy of double Honour*, who, not only does theſe things, but does them in the moſt effectual Manner, and to the beſt Advantage. Following the Apoſtle's Advice, he is to this End not only to a ſingle Church or a peculiar Dioceſe; but by communicating his Precautions to the whole Chriſtian World; in that extenſive Way which is open'd by the Advantage of the Preſs: ταῦτα ὑποτιθέμενος τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς, *laying theſe things before the Eyes of the Brethren*; in ſo commodious a manner, *that he who runs may read them*; and he who *reads* may *underſtand* them, without *one to guide* him.

Finally; Whatever Talents, Gifts, or Graces; Whatever Accompliſhments of Human Learning, or Degree of Perfection, any *Miniſter has attain'd in the Words of Faith and of good Doctrine*; If he does but exerciſe himſelf therein with a ſincere Aſſiduity; If he does but *put the Brethren in Remembrance of theſe things*, in ſuch a Manner as is moſt agreeing with his Capacity and Attainments, (provided he does it with a Temper truly Chriſtian) *Bleſſed is that Miniſter, whom his Lord, when he cometh, ſhall find ſo doing.*

FINIS.